

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: DONG-A ILBO NEWSPAPER

SUMMARY: SEVEN-MONTH ADVERTISING BOYCOTT OF DONG-A ILBO REPORTEDLY WILL END SHORTLY, RELIEVING FINANCIAL CRISIS THAT HAD THREATENED CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF KOREA'S LEADING DAILY.

1. LOGJAM HAS BROKEN IN LONG-SMOLDERING DISPUTE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND DONG-A ILBO. ACCORDING USIS SOURCES, PAID ADVERTISING WILL BEGIN APPEARING AGAIN BY END THIS WEEK OR EARLY NEXT WEEK. WHILE GOVERNMENT HAS COME OUT ON TOP, MANY DONG-A ILBO SUPPORTERS RELIEVED THAT PAPER HAS AT LEAST SURVIVED, AS SOME SAY, "TO FIGHT AGAIN ANOTHER DAY."

2. YI, TONG-UK, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, WHO CAME TO DONG-A IN MARCH TO SUPERVISE DISCIPLINING OF "ERRANT" REPORTERS, HAS BEEN NAMED VICE-PRESIDENT IN ADDITION TO RETAINING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF TITLE. SPECULATION IS THAT PRESIDENT KIM SANG-MAN, HAVING COME TO TERMS WITH GOVERNMENT, WILL LEAVE FOR EXTENDED TRIP ABROAD AND LEE WILL EFFECTIVELY RUN PAPER FROM HERE ON, THOUGH KIM WILL RETAIN TITLE AS PRESIDENT.

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3. OF TOTAL 180 DONG-A JOURNALISTS FIRED AT VARIOUS STAGES DURING DISPUTE, APPROXIMATELY 40 ARE BACK ON PAYROLL. ELEVATION OF LEE TO VICE-PRESIDENCY INDICATES LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY FURTHER CONCESSION TO REMAINING 140 WHO HAD BEEN INSISTING ON HIS REMOVAL AS ONE OF CONDITIONS FOR SETTLING THEIR GRIEVANCES.

4. ONE MATTER YET UNRESOLVED IS WHETHER DONG-A WILL CONCEDE TO RUMORED GOVERNMENT DEMAND THAT THEY PUBLISH STATEMENT TO EFFECT THAT ADVERTISING BOYCOTT WAS NOT GOVERNMENT-INSPIRED.

5. SOURCES REPORT THAT, FOR SAKE OF APPEARANCES, SCENARIO CALLS FOR ADS TO BEGIN APPEARING AGAIN GRADUALLY, BUILDING UP AGAIN TO FORMER LEVEL WITHIN COUPLE WEEKS. REPORTEDLY ALREADY IN HAND ARE AD ORDERS FROM SEVERAL LARGE DRUG AND COSMETIC FIRMS, TRADITIONALLY BIGGEST ADVERTISERS. ALL WERE PLACED BY PHONE WITH WHAT DESCRIBED AS ALMOST IDENTICAL MESSAGE "NOW THAT DONG-A IS AGAIN PARTICIPATING IN NATIONAL CONSENSUS, WE WILL RESUME ADVERTISING."

6. DONG-A PRINT SHOP EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT 150 PERCENT BONUS WILL BE PAID THIS MONTH. THE TWICE-A-WEEK EDITIONS WITH REDUCED PAGES WILL BE ELIMINATED AND REGULAR SIX-DAY-A-WEEK 8-PAGE EDITIONS WILL RESUME, INDICATING THAT FINANCIAL CRISIS WHICH THREATENED TO CLOSE THE PAPER HAS PASSED.
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